

SWINDON & DISTRICT GROUP OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS

www.swindondrivers.com

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Newsletter

November 2005

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Disclaimer

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The Swindon & District Group of Advanced Motorists retains the names and addresses of all group members on computer for mailing and administrative purposes.

WHO'S WHO IN YOUR GROUP?

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CHAIRMAN'S RAMBLINGS

First let me thank you all for electing me to the elevated position of Chairman. The greater thanks must go to Mark Simpson who has occupied this hot seat before me. I have just been reading his comments in the last newsletter and hope that I contribute as much as he has over the last four years.

Much as Mark indulged in a final "Ramble" I want to take this opportunity to have a "first" Ramble and tell you a bit about myself and what all this IAM business means to me!

I have been passionate about cars for as long as I can remember. I started driving the day after my 17th birthday - I had to wait for Saturday! My parents taught me to drive - my Dad taking responsibility for early lessons, and my Mum for the majority of the rest. I was at college - so every day, when I got home, I would make a cup of tea for my Mum, tie the L plates onto her bright yellow Mini (OK it was the 70's and that seemed perfectly normal...) and invited her to sit in the passenger seat for a bit. She was great - and the daily practice paid off. Three months later I passed my test first time.

After a couple of years and some work I bought my first car - a Hillman Imp. This was a fabulous car, in my opinion, and I firmly believed it was the fastest thing on four wheels. The fact that it only had 38bhp was obviously a blessing for the rest of the motoring public. I learned a lot about cars for two reasons. The Hillman Imp had a rear mounted engine, primitive front suspension, drum brakes and a nasty "bite" in wet conditions. I had very little money - so all the maintenance was down to me - however as I was off to University in Scotland to do a degree in Mechanical Engineering - so I thought it was fun anyway.

Time passed and my enthusiasm for cars continued. I progressed to a Ford Escort Mexico Mk1 - my all time favourite car! At the same time my friend Ken and I did some off road rallying in his Ford Escort RS1600 Mk1 - again plenty of opportunity for major maintenance - engines, gearboxes, axles, brakes, suspension - all needed our tender loving care and all of our money. Some long summer jobs and winter bar work to support all that! In amongst all this I met a lovely girl called Liz.

After University I tried some road rallying in England. This was quite different to the off road events I had been used to and after half a dozen events my driver and I agreed that it was too fast for the public roads and decided to quit.

In the meantime I managed to persuade Liz that I was a reasonable prospect and she agreed to marry me. So for some time getting married and buying houses were all more important than cars. I did get into motor sport again some years later. This time in the family Astra GTE doing some "sprinting" - essentially the same as hill climbing but on the flat. This demands extreme precision and self-control if you are to remain on the tarmac and be competitive. Later I shared my brothers highly modified 200bhp Dolomite Sprint with slick tyres. My brother and I were rarely separated by more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of a second at the end of the competition - so it was competitive as well.

In 1991 we were blessed with the arrival of a baby girl, so motor sport went onto the back burner. I did manage to take up sailing again - on the excuse that the family could (one day) join in as well. While I had sailed a lot with my parents I buckled down to some serious learning and became a "Yachtmaster" in 1997. My examiner made the comment "If you want to be a Yachtmaster - you must be a master of yachts" - demanding of his candidates the very highest standards of yachtsmanship - not just in sailing but in overall etiquette and behaviour. The IAM exam is tough - an hour and a half with your examiner - a Yachtmaster assessment is done over 24 hours.... The bottom line is the same - you don't need luck - if you can do it you pass - if not you have an opportunity to understand where you need to improve.

That brings me up to my speeding fine in 2001. I scored three points on the way back to Wanborough a day or two after my father's funeral. My fault. Very cross. Twenty five years record stained. Needed to refocus my driving. I contacted the IAM local group - I was delighted to speak to Kirsty Newland the associate rep. at the time. We used to work together at Allied Dunbar many years ago. After a short time I was teamed up with Richard Arman as my observer. Richard was straight and fair. We worked together and identified areas for improvement, and I insisted on weekly practice - sorry Richard! Anyway things turned out well - and I passed my IAM test. Richard suggested that I might like to consider being an Observer. I didn't feel worthy - and wondered whether I would be able to meet such high standards. Well I succumbed to temptation and a number of you reading this are in a better position than me to comment on my abilities, or lack of them!

That brings us to Wednesday 7 September. I spoke to Mark in the car park - telling him that my wife had told me to keep my hands in my pockets and not come back home as a committee member. Well those of you who were there witnessed my failure to do so! I have confessed to Liz - and she laughed - so that's OK too.

Well I have a passion for cars and driving. Over time I have used my enthusiasm to build my skills so that I can enjoy my driving and my cars - and be as safe as possible. I want to echo the thoughts shared at the AGM - we are all particular about our driving. We all want to maintain standards. We all think that these things make driving more enjoyable (I didn't use the word "fun" - this is a serious business and more satisfying than a "bit of fun" ever will be!). The core Group activity revolves around the Observers. I think this is where we need to build our resources and skills. I hope to maintain my observing - and I need to move up the skills ladder. I'd really like to invest in observer training and development. We need a new Observers - it is hugely rewarding - but scary at first - you feel a big responsibility - but it will help you develop and hone your own skills. Please take the first step - come and talk, drop us a line...

I've rambled long enough. Thanks for inviting me to take on this role of Chairman - hope to see you soon.

Graham Mearns

GROUP NEWS

Test Passes

Congratulations to **Simon Clarke** and his observer **Debbie Butland** on his recent test pass.

New Members

Welcome to **N Kershaw**, **M Anderson**, **Richard Cleaver** (see item below) and **Doris Hawkins**.

The Group has agreed to sponsor a person through the IAM Skill For Life Programme. David Douch has represented us on BBC Radio Swindon on the Graham Seaman show on several occasions. Fourteen respondents rose to the challenge by contacting the BBC who reduced this to two.

For this to work the BBC need a person who has the flexibility to fit in with the programme schedules while from the IAM's point of view we needed a candidate who really wanted to acquire the Skill for Life.

Richard Cleaver aged 18 has been chosen. His family has a history of passing the DSA driving test first time and Richard was no exception.

He will be closely observed and his progress will be reviewed on the Graham Seaman show on a weekly basis depending on how things go.

Bryan Davis will commence working for the IAM in the full-time role of Group Support Manager as from 11 November 2005

He is an IAM Examiner and qualified Group Observer.

He has been a long term supporter of the IAM having undertaken various roles both at Group and Regional level. For the last 6 years he has been a Member of the IAM Council as DCM for the Midlands and South West. He can be contacted via 0121 702 2417 or bryan.davis@iam.org.uk

FROM YOUR CHIEF OBSERVER

Hello from your new Chief Observer, this is my first message in this post. I would like to remind all members of the Swindon Group that they are entitled to a FREE check drive with a Senior Observer. This will not affect their qualification, but may point out if they are lapsing into “standard” rather than advanced driving!

Now that the clocks have gone back and the nights are drawing in, have you done a full POWER check? Do you know that the latest reports say that you should replace tyres at 2 mm rather than 1.6 mm as the amount of grip is significantly reduced when you go under 2mm?

Please remember that it is illegal to drive peering through a porthole in your windows, you must take the time to clear all windows and external mirrors before moving off. Now is a good time to check that you have windscreen antifreeze added to your washer bottle, do not use radiator antifreeze as it may damage your paintwork.

And finally if you have any questions regarding Advanced Driving feel free to contact me (my details are on the web and inside front cover).

Seasons Greetings

Les Brown

IN THE NEWS

Police Force Merger?

Proposals from the Home Office indicate that the number of police forces in England is likely to be reduced to “meet the needs of 21st Century Policing”. As they stand, the proposals will lead to the merger of Wiltshire Constabulary with the Avon & Somerset, Gloucestershire, Dorset and possibly even the existing Devon & Cornwall (combined) police force into an as yet unnamed regional force.

The Group does not have any political view on these plans but we do have a close relationship with the Wiltshire Constabulary as they conduct the Advanced Driving Test and so we will be taking a close interest in these developments. If they go ahead there are also likely to be significant implications for the management of the Police Helicopter and Air Ambulance as well as the Safety Camera Partnership.

Similar plans are already under discussion for the Ambulance Service. Meanwhile Taunton has already been named as the location for a combined regional Fire Service Control Centre.

Speed Limit Enforcement

A report in the Guardian suggests that the 70mph motorway speed limit may soon be strictly enforced to reduce the volume of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere by vehicles. The intention is to help Britain meet it's targets in this area under international treaty commitments - something with which it is struggling with at present.

Blunsdon Bypass

A public enquiry was recently held into the proposed Blunsdon Bypass. The A419 currently divides the village. If the outcome of the public enquiry is favourable construction should start in Summer 2006.

GLORIOUS GOODWOOD

Back in the summer I enjoyed a couple of major outdoor events. The first was a trip to the National Bowl at Milton Keynes - to escort my 13 year old daughter to a Green Day concert, the second was to treat myself to a day out at the Goodwood Festival of Speed.

To be honest “Green Day concert’s” are not really my thing, so with some reluctance I embarked on my first visit to the “Bowl” - and quite a venue it is. We shared the arena with 65,000 people on one of the hottest weekends of the year. I was genuinely impressed - everybody was really nice - the bands ranged from awful to good which was fine. The biggest issue was drinking enough water. The organisers were quite well prepared for this and made a point of handing out water in paper cups. The unfortunate result was that we (and our 65,000 friends) soon developed a sort of carpet of crushed paper!

The following weekend was my treat. I took my 11 year old son and a friend of his to the last day of the Goodwood Festival of Speed near Chichester. It didn’t take too long to get down there despite a bit of queuing over the last couple of miles or so. We parked up, and I was able to tell the car next to me that one of his rear tyres looked like it could do with some air. He confessed that he knew - and would deal with it on the way home.

After a surprisingly long walk from the car park - past the golf course and down to the main entrance - we got in. I had bought my ticket in advance for a very reasonable £42 or so and the boys, being under 12, got in for free. I diverted our party through the nearest paddock - to my delight there were all sorts of racing cars tucked away under long tents. We could walk up and peer inside the cars, revel in the noise of engines being warmed up, and breathe in the whiff of freshly burnt mineral racing oil. As we emerged from the paddock we were confronted with a food concession area. The first place I saw was “Seafood and Champagne” with teak chairs and tables arranged neatly in front. At once two things occurred to me - “Hey - this is better than a carpet of crushed paper” and “I can’t possibly afford it!”

The Goodwood festival of Speed is a mixture of motor racing and nostalgia. The event is actually a hill climb. This means that cars compete over a course of 1.16 miles, one at a time. Each car will drive the course four times over the competition, which in the case of Goodwood is over three days, with the final and most spectacular day being on the Sunday (it is also the most expensive day). The cars are divided into a number of classes, each representing a different era of motor racing. So the cars range from vintage, to modern Formula 1 via Le Mans, Touring Cars, motor cycles etc. Some of the cars are worth millions - they are all driven with enthusiasm, some much harder than the others.

One of my brother's friends, Mike Cross, who has the good fortune to work for Jaguar, had been offered a drive in the "TWR Silk Cut Jaguar" - winner of the 1998 Le Mans race. In the end Mike did not drive the car - he felt that he needed to do some testing before committing himself to squirting a 691 bhp Jag weighing less than a ton up the hill. Very sensible. Nonetheless it provided us with a bit of local interest in the Jaguar tent.

Being a bit mean I had not bought grandstand tickets - so we walked around and enjoyed the cars in the paddock. Up by the Formula 1 area my son asked if he could sit in the Williams F1 car. I suggested he ask the team - he did, and they showed him into the hot seat. The access to the cars and the teams is fantastic. Everybody is so approachable, keen on their cars and just as keen to share the experience. Later we were standing by the F1 Toyota garage - they invited the boys in for a look around without being asked. Just great.

We watched some cars go up the hill - the noise is fantastic - some nice classic Aston Martins, Jaguars, Ferraris' etc. The boys thought they looked a bit slow - and wondered why the tyres were so narrow - and how would they get any down force... Well it's a new perspective. I enjoyed it - but it was hard for the boys to see over the bales of hay and between the crowds. So we walked up to the rally stage at the top of the course.

As we approached the rally area we walked along next to the stage. We were treated to a number of rally cars hurtling by. The boys were really impressed by this - the noise, the stones being thrown up - the cars travelling sideways - wheels spinning. Hugely spectacular

compared to the track cars. We got up to the start area in time to see a Mk1 Ford Escort launch itself into the stage. Of course this was nostalgia time for me - I used to navigate for a friend in a very similar car years ago. Moving on into the paddock there was a Lancia Stratos, Rothmans Escort Mk2, TRV8, MG Metro 6R4, Porsche 911 Safari specification rally car. Of course there was a sprinkling of Subaru and EVO cars to entertain the boys. How little they understand...

Refreshed with ice creams and burgers (the budget did not stretch to the seafood and champagne) I treated the boys to a go on some off road karts. They thought this was great - and I took the opportunity for a sit down. After that we made our way back down to the main arena in time to see the modern F1 cars getting ready for their runs. This little French chap walked past me in his Toyota overalls - Olivier Panis of course, winner of the 1996 Monaco Grand Prix. I didn't say "bonjour" - didn't think he'd know who I was. It was very crowded by the track so we could not get a look in so we decided to call it a day.

I think we'd walked about 10 miles, we'd had a grand time, and were all pretty tired. So a traffic beating exit at about 4 pm meant we were all back in Wanborough in good time for supper.

Glorious Goodwood - certainly!

While I'm on the subject we'd like to take the Swindon Group to the Goodwood skid pan as one of our activities next year. If you'd like to come why not drop us a line. It should be fun - I'm not sure that we'll have the seafood and champagne - but it will be a quality day out.

Graeme Mearns

LETTER TO THE NEWSLETTER

Having now given up the role of Chief Observer I can relax a little, attend the monthly meetings and enjoy the topics arranged by the committee.

I enjoyed the presentation after the AGM; it gave an insight into the 'Insurance World' and the way it works.

It was really interesting to hear the members discuss their experiences of phoning for quotes and saying: "I phoned A,B, C and they were cheaper than you"; "They didn't offer this cover, or that cover"; "The cheapest quote was from x"; "You quoted £x for a member of my family".

All different stories but I noticed one theme: **"The Cheapest"**

To me it was strange not to hear "value for money" or "professional customer service"

I know that price comes into it but I have dealt with my insurance company for many years and have had excellent service from them. I phone around each year and in fact my insurance at present is £70 dearer than the cheapest quote. After doing a considerable amount of homework, I decided that the dearer quote was better value for money on the basis of the complete package and my confidence in the insurers' ability to deal with any claim with complete professionalism.

To me, there is no such thing as cheap insurance, especially when you need to pursue a claim: that's when you find out how cheap it was!

At the Group Meeting in October we enjoyed a presentation by BP/ Castrol on fuel technology. It was very good - a highly professional and slick presentation from two knowledgeable experts. These talks are good - don't miss out - come to the meetings and enjoy them - those that came kept the speakers on their toes answering questions late into the night!

Chris Gleed

NEW DVD RELEASES

Motorfilms have recently released the first in a new series of motoring heritage DVDs. These are collections of classic original promotional films from the British Motor Corporation and British Leyland Archives. The first four titles are “Best of British Leyland”, “Best of Original Mini”, “Best of Land Rover” and the “Best of Vintage Austin”. These films have previously been available on VHS tape but have now been remastered for DVD and as a result now offer the viewer pin sharp video and excellent audio clarity.

Viewing the British Leyland and Mini titles are a poignant and evocative experience for anyone who grew up in the 1960s and 70s. The BMC films from the sixties invoke the romantic optimism of the time in a manner reminiscent of Prime Minister Harold Wilson’s “White Hot Technological Revolution” while the BL films tend to have a “harder” edge to them reflecting the changing spirit of the seventies with the industry starting to become aware of the onset of globalisation.

The British Leyland DVD in particular is a reminder that in so many ways the Austin Maxi, Allegro (“the new driving force from Austin” - Quartic Steering Wheel, Hydragas Suspension) and Princess were innovative vehicles for their time, while the Metro was seen as a “make or break” product for the company in the late seventies and the outcome of a long development programme instigated by the 1973 oil crisis.

Meanwhile Duke Video have released the last in their “Ford” series with a look at the Escort - “star of rally, road and track”. The Escort went on sale in 1968 and its various incarnations were often competitors to some of the BL cars of the same era such as the Allegro and Marina. There was quite a contrast between the marketing philosophies of the two companies - the BMC/BL films tend to adopt a “British stiff upper lip” presentation whilst Ford show their global parentage with a far more relaxed Americanised approach. Some models even came with a vinyl roof as standard!

Motorfilms : <http://www.motorfilms.com/>

Duke Video : <http://www.dukevideo.com/>

AIR AMBULANCE VISIT

Grateful thanks go to Mary Laing for our recent visit to Devizes to see first hand how the Wiltshire Air Ambulance team works.

As we drove into Police HQ. at Devizes, the base for the Air Ambulance, the helicopter took off and we thought we were in for a disappointing evening.

We had a good group of 18 people made up of family and friends and we joined with a group from the British Red Cross based at Warminster. We were introduced to Richard Miller a red suited Paramedic who said he hoped the helicopter would only be 40 minutes or so - It had been called to an incident in Swindon !!

The Wiltshire Air Ambulance Service was started in April 1990 and has gone from strength to strength. In 2004 it was called out to attend to 473 incidents, that was 180 more than the previous year. The Air Ambulance is entirely dependent upon public support and this year the funding Appeal is set at £350,000, which is about a quarter of the actual running costs. The remaining three quarters is funded by the police who use it for various incidents.

Just after 8pm the helicopter a MD902 Explorer landed, Richard went through the maintenance of the aircraft. The service intervals are 50 and 100 hours flying time on the rotor blades and 500 hours before needing a full certificate of Air worthiness, which is normally carried out at Staverton. The helicopter is a twin-engine unit and it is possible to land on only one if the other should fail. The exhaust from the tail of the unit comes out at 100 miles per hour and the temperature is over 70°C - Not a good place to stand.

Richard talked about the helicopter and how the crew consisted of the pilot, the ambulance paramedic and a police observer. His role is to respond to and manage police tasks that the aircraft may be sent to including missing persons, offences in progress and pursuits. In addition to these primary tasks the police observers on the unit receive enhanced medical training so they are able to support the aircraft paramedic in assisting with CPR, spinal immobilization, setting up drips and preparing drugs at the scene of a medical emergency.

It normally takes 20 minutes to clean up and re-supply the unit. The items that sometimes 'go missing' include leg and arm splints that are left at the various hospitals after patients have been transferred.

The paramedics have recently trialled what they call a 'Grab Bag'. This contains everything that is required initially at a medical incident, including an oxygen cylinder, a C-Spine collar, a small hand held suction unit, ET tubes for intubation and Cannulas for infusions. This ensures that they can get to the patient fast in the knowledge that they have everything to hand.

After lots of photography Richard gave an interesting demonstration on how the stretcher operated. He explained how it could be moved into various positions whilst still being secured to enable the best medical aid to be administered en-route to hospital. He also explained the operation of the communication equipment on board.

All in all it was a very enjoyable and informative evening. Knowing what good work this unit carries out, a big thank you to all the team. For further information or if you are interested in making a donation or organizing a fundraising event please contact Mary Laing on 01380 739453

Debbie Herbert

QUICK TIP

Avoid Theft

Please note the following. It has been reported that moped riders flag down a car pretending something is wrong with the car and they need to speak to you. As you speak to the rider (distracting your attention) a second person opens another door and grabs bags etc from within the vehicle.

David Douch

ZURICH FINANCIAL SERVICES Group Night Meeting 7 September 2005

Following on from the AGM and the election of the new Committee we went on to welcome Mr Roy Seeds from Zurich Financial Services.

Roy first worked for Eagle Star some 25 years ago and like most large companies his role over the those years has changed several times along with the Company name. He now holds the position of Motor Underwriting Manager for the UK Personal Lines division of Zurich.

During the presentation Roy talked about vehicle insurance and the breakdown of the costs to the industry. Due to difficult times over the last 10 years in the Stock Market and some major incidents for example, the Selby train crash, a knock on effect has been felt by the Motor Insurance industry with the result that premiums have doubled on average.

He said of every £100 received they had been paying out £140 for some claims and the fact that higher costs, for personal injuries were on the increase. Some hospitals now allow leaflets to be left in waiting areas by companies claiming to get more money for any personal injuries. Again this is done as once 'someone' can be found 'responsible' the NHS can go on to claim reimbursement of costs from a motoring accident all this then has a knock-on effect back to the Insurance Company and eventually to you and me when paying our motoring insurance.

Roy did go on to say that there are a great number of variations between the figures given by companies. For 'same car and driver details' the savings can be over £100 and as it is our money we need to shop around. If we use a broker we could expect to pay higher premiums than if we do the work ourselves and now by shopping on line the savings can be amazing.

Moving on to the future the top Insurance Groups are now working with the Police in setting up a database. It is hoped that this will eventually tie in with the new system for storing information on vehicle MOT's and RFLs, thus reducing the number of people driving un-roadworthy vehicles. Some Insurance companies are running pilot schemes to trial 'Pay as you go' and 'Black Box' recognition for costing out insurance on actual miles driven and on types of roads used.

Again I am sure those attending the AGM Group night found the evening very interesting and would thank Roy for coming along and giving a splendid presentation.

Debbie Herbert

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BP GLOBAL FUELS TECHNOLOGY

Group Night Meeting 5 October 2005

At the first group night after the election of the new committee Graham Mearns, our new Chairman opened the evening with a warm welcome to Georg Bleimschein and Brian Macey from BP Global Fuels Technology based at Pangbourne in Berkshire.

Georg gave a brief rundown of his career path. Starting with a 20-year spell with Exxon working on emissions, he spent a year with F1 McLaren and their engineering team and the last 6 months he has been working for BP on Product Development.

Most of us have seen the advertisements for BP and how far across the world they are known. We know them not only for their petrol stations but for the research and development in sourcing the oil from as far away as Alaska. The base fuel is moved either by pipeline or by shipping in huge tankers to the refineries

Some of the benefits to purchasing BP Ultimate petrol were shown with the test results to a Saab Turbo with a 15% improvement on economy and wear to the engine and acceleration take-up. Other benefits were, powerful engine cleaning, increase in the octane number and friction reduction. On a diesel engine tests showed an increase in Cetane number which helps with engine noise reduction and increases in lubricant and anti corrosion properties and low foam in the cleaning agents.

Brian has been working at Milborne on vehicle testing and the last vehicle tested they achieved an impressive 120 miles per gallon. The team hope with cleaner fuels and better engine management fuel consumption will continue to improve. The emission tests that are carried out on vehicle which undergo the current MOT tests are only just the start, over the coming years new emission testing will come into force for new vehicles. At present even Germany who are leading the way say their figures will fail the 2008 'Fleet' targets for fuel economy for diesel and hybrids.

Government forecasts indicate that by 2030 there will be a 60% increase in energy demands across the board from industry, vehicles and housing and that we need to look harder at alternative fuel sources. Further details can be found on the BP website at www.bp.com/carbonfootprint. Since 2001 their energy efficiency projects have reduced emissions by over 4 million tonnes. They are looking at a carbon footprint, which is the amount of carbon dioxide emitted each year by the energy we use. The average UK household footprint is 10 tonnes per year.

Some of the other points Georg mentioned were the Safe Working Practices implemented by BP for their staff. Driving standards have been established regarding tanker drivers working hours as well as the use of seatbelts and mobile phone use. These safety standards apply over the world and also include standards for the wearing of safety helmets on snowmobiles, quad bikes and other special vehicles. Staff are also tested and advised on the taking of medication, drugs and alcohol. This would also apply to any passengers that were carried. In this way BP hope to care for their staff and the environment.

Debbie Herbert

QUICK TIP

Keep up to date by visiting the Group Website
<http://www.swindondrivers.com/>

“Just to let you know that, although I am only very rarely able to come to the regular meetings I have now found the Web site and am delighted with it.

I find it easy to navigate and it certainly keeps me up-to-date with Group happenings. The links are imaginative and interesting

Thank you”

From : Barbara P
Coordinating FreeCens for LND Whitechapel and parts of Bethnal Green, Mile End and Stepney

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

7th December 2005 @ Blunsdon House Hotel 19:30hrs

Peter Amor - Fish Brothers

Peter is a Sales Consultant specialising in Fiat and Alfa Romeo cars.

January 2006

As usual there is **no meeting in January.**

1st February 2006 @ Blunsdon House Hotel 19:30hrs

Winter Highway Maintenance

How do the Authorities cope with the cold weather in winter? It's something that we all take for granted, but it is a complex and costly logistical and engineering exercise. Come along and see how you money is spent.

Among their responsibilities is to monitor meteorological data and satellite information during the winter to determine if and when to apply 'salt' to the roads. We all remember the M11 incident a couple of years ago when the Highways Agency got caught out. They have only a short time window to salt the roads; too early and it is dispersed or washed off; too late. Different materials are used for deicing, 'salt' that glistens and makes the road look wet etc.